

Serial No.: 10/074,203
Atty. Docket No.: D5114

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed March 5, 2004, the Examiner indicated that Claims 2-8, 10, 12-14, and 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants are aware that a recent judicial decision has stated that inclusion the limitations of a base claim and any intervening claims into a dependent claim making it independent may preclude the application of the doctrine of equivalents to these limitations from the base and intervening claim. As such, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 2, canceled Claim 2, and then amended Claim 3 to reference Claim 1 instead of Claim 2. This should be acceptable to the Examiner. In regards to Claim 10, applicants have included the limitations of the base claim and intervening claim as suggested for allowance by the Examiner. In regards to Claim 12, Applicants have amended Claim 11 (the base claim of Claim 12) to include the limitations of Claim 12, canceled Claim 12 and then amended Claim 13 to reference Claim 11 instead of Claim 12. Once again as far as the Examiner, this should be acceptable. Applicants have amended Claim 16 to include the limitations of the base claim and intervening claim as suggested for allowance by the Examiner.

This amendment results in there being 4 independent claims versus 2 as originally filed. The attached PTO/SB 17 Fee Transmittal Form includes the authorization of payment for one additional independent claim above the allotted 3 independent claims in addition to payment for the one-month extension.

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Applicant believes the claims as amended are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests favorable action by the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,



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10 of 11